

Special Programs

Special Employment

Graduate Student  
Program (GRA)

**POLICY:**

.01 The Graduate Student Program (GRA) provides year-round and summer educational opportunities for relevant research experience while students are pursuing a graduate degree. In some cases, students can arrange to conduct master's or doctoral thesis research at the Laboratory if the sponsoring organization and the school mutually agree. The program complements the students' education with work experience related to their field of study while providing the Laboratory with highly qualified graduate students who may eventually be candidates for regular positions.

.02 Students are hired under the GRA program at the request of a sponsoring Laboratory organization. Before a student may be hired, the sponsoring organization must submit an educational work plan for the position that describes the duties and educational component of the position and identifies a Laboratory employee who will be the student's mentor. Students may apply for employment through the GRA Program at any time. Procedures for sponsoring organizations and applicants are found in the [Student Program Guidelines](#).

**Post Master's Category**

.03 The post master's category of the GRA program offers graduate students the opportunity to participate in the GRA program for one year after receiving a master's degree. Post master's students are encouraged to take class(es) during this year. To remain in the GRA program after the one year maximum in the post master's category, students must provide documentation of acceptance into another graduate program (master's or Ph.D). See [.05](#).

**Eligibility**

.04 Students must meet [eligibility requirements](#) annually.

.05 **Enrollment** — Students who have completed all course requirements for a bachelor's degree by the date of hire, and have been accepted into a graduate program at an

---

## **Graduate Student Program (GRA)**

accredited college or university for the upcoming semester; or

are currently enrolled and in good academic standing (as defined by the college or university) in a graduate program

are eligible. Applicants must submit proof of registration.

**NOTE:** Applicants who have completed the requirements for a bachelor's degree and have been accepted into a graduate program must submit proof of acceptance. Proof of registration is required for continued eligibility.

- .06 ***Length of Participation*** — Students with a bachelor's degree pursuing a master's degree are limited to 4 years; students with a bachelor's degree pursuing a Ph.D. are limited to 7 years. For students with a bachelor's degree who are pursuing a combined master's degree and Ph.D., the maximum time allowed in the program is 8 years. Students with a master's degree who are pursuing a second master's degree are limited to 2 years. Students with a master's degree who are pursuing a Ph.D. are limited to 4 years and those pursuing a master's degree in a new field and a Ph.D. are limited to 6 years.

### **Foreign Nationals**

- .07 DOE approval is required for all non-U.S. citizens to work at the Laboratory. The sponsoring organization must initiate the approval request at the time the offer of employment is extended, and any offer of employment must be contingent upon DOE approval. Students must also have the appropriate visa and work permit before beginning work or receiving payments, including travel reimbursements, from the Laboratory. See [AM 1213, Visas](#).

### **Pay Status**

- .08 Pay status is determined by the number of hours the student will be working on a weekly basis. See [AM 301, General Payroll Policies](#).

---

## **Graduate Student Program (GRA)**

- |                                 |     |  |
|---------------------------------|-----|--|
| <b>Appointment</b>              | .09 | Organizations must evaluate their needs and students' academic goals, eligibility, and availability to determine the most appropriate type of appointment. Appointments may be renewed based on the needs of the organizations and the eligibility of the students. Appointments may be short- or limited-term and may be full-time, part-time, or casual. See <a href="#">AM 301, General Payroll Policies</a> .  |
| <b>Funding</b>                  | .10 | The sponsoring organization must fund each GRA appointment. The funding must include salary (based on standard labor rate), M&S expenses, travel, and division overhead for the organization.  |
| <b>Salary</b>                   | .11 | GRA student salaries are based on the number of credit hours completed annually.   |
| <b>Near-Relative Employment</b> | .12 | See <a href="#">AM 102, Employment Policies</a> .  |
| <b>Off-Site Employment</b>      | .13 | Full-time, part-time, or casual students actively participating in one of the Laboratory's student programs whose primary work location is not on Laboratory property are considered off-site students. Off-site employment requires a memo of justification from the requesting group-level manager to the GRA Program Administrator in the Staffing Group (HR-5) and the approval of the GRA Program Administrator. For detailed instructions, refer to the <a href="#">program guidelines</a> . |
| <b>Separation</b>               | .14 | A student who is hired under a short- or limited-term appointment and whose appointment is not extended must be terminated from Laboratory employment as of the last day of the appointment unless there is an earlier termination.  |
|                                 | .15 | GRA students are employed at the discretion of the Laboratory and may be dismissed at any time and for any reason with the review and approval of the appropriate division-level manager. Consult the HR-5 GRA Program Administrator in the Staffing Group (HR-5) for assistance with an early termination. See <a href="#">AM 113, Terminations</a> .   |

## Graduate Student Program (GRA)

**Performance Assessment** .16 Managers/mentors must complete the [Student Development Feedback Tool](#) for all students on appointments longer than 90 days who work at least 60 days during the review period. This tool is intended as a performance assessment tool to assist in developing strong working relationships and in developing a good understanding of the students' strengths and areas for improvement. Students are also encouraged to make use of the Mentor Feedback Tools

**Conversion to Regular Laboratory Employment** .17 Graduate students with unique skills and qualifications may be converted to Laboratory staff positions (both technical and administrative). Most conversions will occur in the student's present organization; however, a different Laboratory organization also has the ability to convert a graduate student to staff. See GRA Conversion guidelines.

### SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION:

- Responsibilities** .18 *Staffing Group* — HR-5 advertises the GRA Program Laboratorywide and through other recruitment sources. HR-5 also processes applications, assists in matching applicants to jobs, and develops appropriate salary scales.
- .19 *Sponsoring Organization* — The sponsoring organization funds student appointments and related expenses; provides an educational work opportunity and experience, a suitable and safe work assignment and environment, and any required site-specific training; mentors and supervises the student; and evaluates performance as appropriate (see [.16](#)). Every GRA student must have an identified mentor at all times while associated with the Laboratory Student Programs to ensure that the student's work experience is meaningful and complements his or her educational program. The mentor serves as a personal and professional coach

## **Graduate Student Program (GRA)**

during the student's time at the Laboratory. *See the [Mentoring Tool Kit](#).*

- |                                |     |  |
|--------------------------------|-----|--|
| <b>Benefits</b>                | .20 | Student benefits are based on the length of their appointments. Contact the Compensation and Benefits Group (HR-1) for complete information.   |
| <b>Travel</b>                  | .21 | The <a href="#">online travel regulations</a> provide student travel regulations.  |
| <b>Clearances for Students</b> | .22 | The Information and Personnel Security Group (S-6) processes the paperwork for students to be granted security clearances. The sponsoring organization must request the clearance for a student. |